

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

STATEWIDE AVIATION

*John - for - may
be good to share w/0*
TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

4111 AVIATION AVENUE
P.O. BOX 196900
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99579-6900
(907) 269-0730 FAX (907) 268-0489

May 26, 2000

Re: Airport Services

Sandra Alvarez
Igiugig Village Council
PO Box 4008
Igiugig, AK 99613

RECEIVED
DOT & P/F PLANNING

MAY 30 2000

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

Dear Ms. Alvarez:

You sent a letter to the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation dated May 10, 2000 on which you copied AK DOT&PF Commissioner Perkins. Commissioner Perkins asked us to respond to your letter,

We are uncertain what basis in fact you are referencing in your second and third paragraphs that state the same aircraft serving villages for many years are now limited to runways of 3,500 feet or longer. You also state that aircraft fully equipped for medical evacuation services are unable to fly in and out of airports in most villages because of (inadequate) runway lengths. We do not know what aircraft are being restricted to runways less than 3,500 feet that could previously use shorter runways. We specifically have constructed runways during the past 20 years to accommodate medical evacuation aircraft fleet. If you can provide specific information on air carriers refusing to serve your community, we would be pleased to reevaluate.

Maybe some explanation on our process would help. The FAA divides the aircraft fleet into small and large aircraft. Small aircraft are defined as aircraft less than 12,500 pounds gross weight. The long documented goal of the DOT&PF is to provide all communities in Alaska with basic service for **all** small aircraft. (FAA tables indicate 100% of the small aircraft fleet can operate on 3,300 foot long runways.) Where conditions justify a longer runway, we have been able to build longer runways with sufficient documentation. A process is established called the Airport Project Evaluation Board. This process was established to be fair to all communities in Alaska.

Most of the medical evacuation aircraft servicing rural Alaska are in the small airplane category. We know of one aircraft in medical evacuation service, a Learjet, which is in the large aircraft category, and does require longer runways. However, the rest of the medical evacuation fleet currently in service in Alaska are small aircraft, and should be able to operate on airfields of 3,300 feet, or in some cases less. As stated above, if you can provide specific examples of aircraft or air carriers you are concerned about,

Sandra Alvarez

Page 2

May 23, 2000

we would be pleased to evaluate your information.

The Alaska DOT&PF does not receive enough capital money from FAA to make all of the rural airports long enough for use by large aircraft. This is why, in order to be fair to all communities, we have made the decision to establish a minimum level of service to all communities for small aircraft. Some communities desiring longer airports are ^ making significant contributions to our capital improvement projects to allow longer runways to be constructed in their community.

Some good news. The DOT&PF has asked the FM to install an automated weather machine, called an AWOS, in Igiugig; and write an instrument approach-procedure, — based on Global Positioning Satellite navigation that will allow aircraft to land at Igiugig during inclement weather. Construction is scheduled this summer. These two changes should be a significant safety enhancement to your community, and will also enable better medical evacuation service.

Please feel free to write if you can provide specific details to your concerns.

Sincerely,



Carl Siebe, PE
Airports Engineer
Statewide Aviation

cc: Ralph Andrew, Director, Community Health Services, BBAHC
Environmental Health and Safety Division, BBAHC
Representative Carl Moses
Jennifer Wilson, Planning Manager, DOT&PF